

# Pearl River Flood Risk Management: A History

1979

The **Easter Flood** is one of the most costly and devastating floods to ever occur in the state of Mississippi. After the flood, Congress authorizes the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) to develop a comprehensive flood control plan for the Jackson metropolitan area.

1996

The USACE recommends a system of flood walls and levees for flood control called the **Comprehensive Levee Plan**.

John McGowan, McGowan Working Partners, and other landowners propose the **Two Lakes Plan**. The local Levee Board\* and the USACE reject the Two Lakes Plan due to excessive cost.

1998

The USACE Comprehensive Levee Plan fails to receive local support because the plan does not offer additional economic development opportunities.

2001

The Levee Board accepts the role of "local sponsor", taking over responsibility for planning and executing a Jackson-area flood control project. The Levee Board adopts the **LeFleur Lakes Plan**, a flood control and economic development plan modeled after John McGowan's Two Lakes Plan.

2007

After several modification attempts, the USACE rejects the LeFleur Lakes Plan after determining the plan did not meet Corps economic and environmental standards and was a less effective flood control measure than the Comprehensive Levee Plan.

2009

The Levee Board, led by Flowood Mayor Gary Rhoads, votes to move ahead with the Comprehensive Levee plan endorsed by the USACE.

2010

USACE Vicksburg District Commander, Col. Jeffrey Eckstein writes a letter to the Levee Board stating that the Corps will not resume any further study of flood control along the Pearl River for the purpose of considering any lake alternatives or private development features.

2011

John McGowan and other real estate developers create Pearl River Vision Foundation, a non-profit dedicated to promoting a new lake development called **One Lake**. The Levee Board reverses course and enters an agreement with the non-profit to "utilize the expertise of the services of John McGowan of McGowan Working Partners and several engineering, environmental, and legal professionals..." to complete another lake study.

2018

The Levee Board releases a Draft Environmental Impact Statement/Feasibility Study (DEIS/FS) which includes their "preferred plan" Alternative C, the "One Lake" plan.

2020

The Pearl River crests at 36.67 feet in Jackson on February 17 - the 3rd highest crest on record.

2022

The USACE is charged with completing the data gaps in the Levee Board's DEIS/FS to inform the Assistant Secretary of the Army (Civil Works)'s final decision on Jackson flood risk management.

2023

The USACE releases a Notice of Intent to publish a Pearl River Flood Risk Management DEIS/FS. Flood management options being evaluated include non-structural alternatives, hybrid options, and Alternative C ("One Lake"), the Levee Board-preferred plan. The DEIS is scheduled for release Sept 1.

\*Levee Board refers to Rankin Hinds Pearl River Flood and Drainage Control District (Mayors of Jackson, Flowood, Pearl and Richland, and member of Hinds and Rankin Board of Supervisors